

Hello , my name is Thomas Matis and I am 13 years old. I live in Stratford Connecticut and go to Flood Middle school. I am in the seventh grade. Ever since I was born BESB has been helping me. When I got my first CCTV I used it to see the board and to read small text. I am afraid that without BESB as a whole us visually impaired and Blind Students will lose the great quality of services they have given to us.

Also ,I did not have a lot of friends in school, but going to Camp Abilities last summer I was able to meet new friends who are also visually impaired. Plus the people at camp from BESB were so nice I felt like they were family.

Besb provides other activities like Life Skills and sports adventure weekend ,as well as training workshops for my Parents and Teachers. It's because of BESB that I am now a member of the Student Advisory Council. I believe if you keep BESB how it is now , the Visually impaired will have so many more opportunities to grow and learn and experience the same things sighted people do!

If it were not for BESB I probably would not be the successful student I am today. Please DO NOT TAKE BESB APART!!

Thank You, I will take questions now.

Respectfully,

Tom Matis

Appropriation Committee
Senate Bill # 1012
March 15, 2011